The Hampden Hippocrat

A Bulletin for the Hampden District of the Massachusetts Medical Society

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COMPETITION

Professional rivalry is not new to medical men. It has been the rule ever since the cave men of medicine tried out their concoctions on the low brow, **Pithecanthropus Erectus.** In some eras it reached embarrassing extremes. No doubt Aesculapius, that brilliant son of Apollo and Coronis, thought so. He, you must recall, was the well-known physician, posthumously deified, who was electrocuted by Zeus at the request of Pluto the Mortician. Why? Because the latter claimed unfair competition. The original S. Q. had gone so far as to raise a patient from the dead!

We know, too, that the early American medicine men vied one with another in influencing evil spirits with their magic right here in our Pioneer Valley below the Great Falls of the Quonecticut, while their fellow Indian tribesmen were jerking supplies of shad and renewing depleted stores of crockery at the claybanks.

Space is lacking to do justice to the brisk competition that characterized the horse and buggy era either in nags and rigs, or in so-called "medical sects". Besides the regular allopaths, there were the homeopaths, the eclectics, the physiomedicalists; then came Christian pseudoscientists, purveyors of so-called New Thought, and latterly osteopaths and chiropractors; most recently those misfortunate men of the Middlesex, who feel like their kilted namesakes of World War I, those badgered "Ladies from Hell", and are equally rarin' to go.

A whole chapter might be devoted to the patent medicine venders and present-day exploiters of public health who claim to cure with their nostrums and panaceas all the ills and more to which human beings may succumb. But your tympanums currently are ringing with such claims whenever you tune in on the crawded air waves.

Thirty years ago the Germans tried to conquer the world via chemistry, both logistic and medical, and thus eliminate competition. But the needs of war spurred U. S. and allied investigators to new peaks of achievement so that the Huns lost not only the envied sun spot, but world leadership in science as well. Thirty years, it is true, and immeasurable human agony in another greater war has been the cost of reestablishing freedom for friendly international competition in the advancement of happiness and health. From 606 the gamut has run all the way to the current sulfonamides and common bread-crust molds, plasma, amino acids and multimolecular synthesized vitamins.

As a consequence, the present-day fol-

Hampden Hippocrat

"Life is short and art is long, the occasion fleeting, experience fallacious and judgment difficult." —Hippocrates, 430 B.C.

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President—Dr. John Dwyer
Vice-President—Dr. Merrill Hosmer
Secretary-Treasurer—Dr. George C. Steele

lower of Aesculapius, in spite of streamlined transport and communications, scarcely can keep sufficiently abreast of all the advances in the science of medicine to apply them in practice and still find time for food and sleep. To make his lot even more difficult, popular science journals and the lay press avidly circulate reports of medical work which not only are often premature and sometimes cruelly misleading, but the publication of such findings serves to keep the clients yapping at his heels or even a jump or two ahead.

It is not strange, therefore, that the twentieth century practitioner finds himself removed from the lofty pedestal which he occupied when the expectancy of life was shorter and simpler, but research and newsmongery were not so expansive. Nor can he be surprised to find that trained (and salaried) social workers are competing for his place as health advisers to the nation. With organized persistance they have introduced another Wagner bill into Congress to take the purveyance of health under the aegis of still another government bureau and only await a favorable opportunity to speed its adoption. Voluntary medical group insurance at involuntary rates of compensation seems to be the only recourse of the medical men of these furious forties to avert regimentation.

Briefly, let us salute the Medical Automat of the future, when crass competition will give way to political preferment and union hours shall prevail. Then patients may place their two bits in the proper slot and pull out whatever medical dish is desired—provided it is included in the panel. What if it isn't the long-preferred brand? Bologna, some say, no matter how you slice it, still is bologna. Or is it? Let us hope that it will be easier to take than the City for which it was named.

S. Q. Lapius

Address Correspondence to:
Dr. W. A. R. Chapin
121 Chestnut Street, Springfield, Mass.
Telephone 2-7213

From Dr. L. A. Putnam
Holyoke

Dear Hippocrat:

I have been extremely fortunate in my assignments in the Navy. For the first three months I was assistant to Captain James White of Harvard and the Massachusetts General. On his neurosurgical service at Chelsea Naval Hospital, I was instructed in doing all the pneumoencephalograms and spinograms at the hospital. The incidence of intervertebral discs in the service is rather common and I have done as many as five of these operations a week.

Head injuries and fractures of the skull were very common. Many interesting cases of peripheral nerve injury were seen and treated by suture with tantalum wire.

The last three months at Chelsea were spent on the Orthopedic service under Comdr. Peterson of Boston. Needless to

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say, we had many types of fractures to deal with besides numerous cases of internal derangement of the ligaments of the knee joint. Excellent results were obtained in the treatment of selected fractures by means of the Roger Anderson and Haynes apparatus.

The six months which were spent at the U. S. Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, Virginia, were on orthopedic service under Comdr. Judson Wilson of Ohio State. We had many injured from the African and Normandy campaigns at this hospital and we operated every day. Spectacular results were seen in the handling of compound fractures and osteomyelitis. Penicillin is certainly a wonderful drug

My stay at Treasure Island was purely a training period to indoctrinate me into being a good ship doctor. There were about fifty doctors here undergoing this training program and we were instructed in everything pertaining to the construction of a ship, fire fighting, chemical warfare, damage control, buoyancy of a ship,, floatability, etc., etc. The last month was spent a the dispensary and about November 1st my ship was commissioned.

I left a w.k. western port, following a shakedown cruise in southern waters, and headed into the vast Pacific. Life aboard a U. S. Man of War is entirely different from a pleasure cruise. I have very little to do as I have several doctors under me, but from D day on I'll confine my activities to the surgery and there will be plenty of work to do. We have marvelous set-up with all new equipment, two X-ray machines, two operating rooms and twenty corpsmen to assist in the care of casualties.

Please remember me to all the Staff and tell them that I'm looking forward to the day when I'll be back in Holyoke.

Editor's note: Later news testifies that the Pacific is indeed ill-named. Our surgeon needed spts. of ammonia and the grace of God to finish an acute appendectomy between heaving decks! But he did.

Special meeting of the Council, 10:30 A.M. January 31, 1945, (since the regular stated meeting called for February 7, 1945 was cancelled by M. A. T. "under directions of O. D. T."

And so, the Hampden councilors rose in Stygian darkness and broke their fasts as best they could. Three mauve blobs of cotton diverting shafts of pale gold above the horizon eastward from Palmer repaid their efforts in part. The aesthetic enjoyment, however, was diluted once or twice by hilly stretches of ice and a nodding chauffeur. At last came 8 the Fenway in broad daylight and a distant prospect of Cotting lunch. Excerpts from the meeting are hereby salvaged for emphasis. For details, see published reports in the New England Journal.

The following recommendations of the Committee on Public Health were adopted: that the care of children with acute rheumatic fever shall be conducted as a part of service for crippled children with funds eminating from the Children's Bureau of the Department of Labor; that no children will be accepted for care unless the request is signed by a licensed physician and a social service worker has found the family to be medically indigent; that diagnostic, hospital and convalescent care shall be provided either in hospitals, clinics or homes. A large number of children thus can benefit from expert advice. Vocational guidance already offered by

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he State Department of Education will increase he number of individuals capable of self-support.

Dr. Hornor's Committee on Public Relations offered several suggestions which were adopted; namely, that new arrivals in a community when seeking a family physician, should be referred to the Secretary of the District Society—(nice in theory, but barbers and beauticians are much more apt to be consulted); that the President appoint a committee to expand common grounds of agreement with other public groups interested in good medical care.

The Post War Planning Committee's report was adopted without debate. Howard Root and his active sub-committees are laying the ground work to meet the demand for increased hospital appointments and post graduate refresher courses for naval and military surgeons who wish to return themselves to speaking terms with the laity.

The Council voted to approve the Post War Loan Fund when, as and if needed (as per ammendment offered by David Cheever over the objection of Chairman Scahdt). After a year of consideration, the majority of the Councilors still question the need. LeRoy Parkins objected on the grounds of inadequacy and competing with the bankers. He stated that he had found no difficulty in borrowing several thousands dollars after the last war. His second amendment, that existing funds of the Society be used instead of an assessment, was also adopted. Whereupon the matter was referred back to the Committee for study of methods that might persuade the treasurer to loosen the purse strings when, as and if.

The Legislative Committee presented a long report – much too long, for those seats in the vaulted hall are hard. The chief emphasis was laid, and properly so, upon thwarting the organized effort which is being made by the unapproved schools to postpone once more through legislative action the application of the medical practice act for the duration and three years afterward, on the score of the srortage of doctors. It was voted to neglect all other medical bills for the present to concentrate on the defeat of Bill No. 755. All district secretaries should arrange meetings with local legislators in order to make our position clear, namely, that temporary inconvenience is not a sufficient reason to lower the standards of medical practice and undo years of effort that were required to establish these standards.

By this time, the hands of the clock showed fifteen minutes before five. Whereupon the Hampden delegates silently took their departure, hoping that the report of the Committee appointed to suggest shortcuts in Council procedure, would be adopted and somehow in the future prove effective. Once more the sun made pictures of the winter landscape, but to the westward. It also made competition with the 5:00 P. M. traffic difficult, not to mention the arks of the overland freight, and 8:00 P. M. found us back in Hampden County wondering whether the day's accomplishments were worth the effort.

NOTES ON HEARINGS IN DECEMBER BEFORE THE U. S. SENATE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION

In 1942 there were 163,400 deaths from cancer. Research money is scanty and wealthy citizens have less to give. There is no long term planning with proper financing for reasearch. It is felt that the government should put money into this project and $2,000,000 is thought to be a good start. This appropriation should be made to the Federal Agency, the National Cancer Institution. This Institute could dispose it to the proper universities.

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At the end of the first year the recipients should be studied and reallocations should be made as found fitting.

All this is necessary because income from investments have fallen off. Tax-supported institutions compete with private institutions to the detriment of the latter.

It is also felt that the government should issue 5% government bonds to certain of these institutions whose incomes have shrunken, and that the surplus commodities corporation should sell non-profit institutions at a lower price than other buyers.

At this same hearing the need for psychiatrists was stressed. We need 20,000 in the country. We have 3,000. We train 200 a year. A federal center for research in teaching is being asked for in this hearing.

The government is being asked for $10,000,000 for medical research in 1945, and an increase to 1953 and thereafter $50,000,000 is granted each year.

It is interesting to note that in 1940, money spent on research per death was 17¢ for heart, 38¢ for kidney, $2.18 for cancer and $4.00 for infectious disease other than Infantile Paralysis which spent $5.25 per death.

The above make quite a bill in itself for the tax payers, and this kind of a bill we gladly endorse. This is basic medical practice, and in many ways could be extended and tried out. One is reminded that if the government is going to tax an pay for people's care, they will never get around to paying the large bill for research, which is really necessary.

It is gratifying to know that there are thoughtful men in medicine and without, who give their time to think out these things, go to Washington and straighten out the crooked road of medical and political thinking.

There is nothing in the above to get votes. It is more like the early training of an infant so that he becomes a man, compared to taking the grown man and trying to make him over.

The following are the recommendations made to the health and education committee.

1—The Federal Government should establish an Authority for Medical Research and Education.

2—The Authority should be empowered to:

a. Act as the receiving agent for all data and projects to be terminated at the disbandment of The Office of Scientific Research and Development's Committee for Medical Research.

b. Aid biological and medical research and education.

c. Survey domestic and foreign activities.

d. Recommend to the President and to Congress medical and public health policy.

3—The Authority is to be composed of 12 members.

4—The Administrative staff of the Authority is to be composed of personnel maintained as a unit of the Public Health Service.

5—The Authority is to organize such subdivisions as it may choose to carry on its various fields of activity.

6—The Authority is to receive and to disburse funds allocated to it by Congress.

a. We estimate an initial annual requirement of $25 millions, rising eventually to a sum of about $100 millions for research facilities alone.

b. Medical and biological education should be allocated additional funds, for training and clinical facilities, salaries for teachers and stipends for students. We estimate the sum required immediately to be approxi-

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mately $50 millions, rising eventually to $150 millions.

7—The sums allocated to the Authority should be estimated in advance for a period of 10 years and the Authority should be empowered to make its commitments on that basis.

8—Government aid is to go only to institutions which maintain standards prepared and published by the Auhority.

Is it not important that the members of our district society think over and subscribe to the above abbreviations of the reports quoted. Is it not time that we had something positive to say and understand rather than give negation only to the Dingwell Bill?

The Following Is For Your Information

In post-war planning your State Committee recommends that the President of this ociety write the President and Secretary of each district society, superinendent or chairman of the staff and the chairman of the Board of Turstees of each hospital in the State whose staff members are in community practice; suggesting that a local committee, or Health Council be formed in aciordance with the policy already adopted by the Council, to consist of physicians, hospital trustees, educators, public officials, employers and representatives of labor to consider and adopt measures for extending medical services in the community and increasing preventive health education both by local effort and through cooperation with agencies of the state medical society.

The Committee on Public Health recommends that the Acute Rheumatic Fever Program follow the conduct of service for crippled children. All cases will have to be referred to by a letter from the patient's physician. They plan to use the North Redding State Sanitorium, and purchase such other hospital care as geographically necessary. Fifteen states now have this program.

The committee reported that consultation service, should only be rendered by certified members of their particaular board or those eligible for it. This last line was rejected by your executive committee most of whom were members of specialty boards.

As one goes through this committee's report it is certainly full of social and medical progress and up to now it hasn't cost the tax payer any money. This seems to the writer to be true social and medical progress.

The Committee on Public Relations thought that the present time was not propitous or getting an ideal publicity man.

To show that this committee is competent, a sub-committee, set up by them, covered in the following three paragraphs:

a. The abuse of the rules that an injured employee may have the services of a physician of his own choice.

b. A question of the correct charge by a doctor to a patient whom he treated. The case having previously been declined by the Committee on Ethics and Discipline.

c. The question of simplified insurance forms which was brought to the attention of the Public Relations Committee by the Norfolk District.

In the report of the Committee on Maternal Welfare—the following paragraph is noted:

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It was brought to the committee's attention that supplemental fees are said to be demanded by physicians in some instances before they would agree to take cases under the EMIC Program. Before discussion on this subject, a motion was made by Dr. Richard M. Smith that the secretary send a letter to Dr. Florence L. McKay, Director of the Division of Child Hygiene, of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, calling her attention to the fact that physicians were said to be collecting a fee for obstetrical service under the EMIC Program after mothers had requested such service but before the applications were signed by the physician. The Committee requests that Dr. McKay furnish any facts that she may have concerning this report.

Dr. Sidney Wiggins and two other anesthetists requested a section of anesthesia in the society. After some discussion this was endorsed by the Executive Commitee. One year ago the Council refused this, there being no one at the meeting to speak for it.

Capt. J. G. Bruce Returns To The United States

Capt. J. Graham Bruce, USAMC, who was held as a prisoner by the Japs at the Bilibid Prison at Manila from the fall of Bataan three years ago until recently liberated by the Americans, among 1350 prisoners, arrived in San Francisco in a party of 300 freed Americans, according to a telephone message received by Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Cloutier of 254 Park Avenue, West Springfield, parents of Mrs. Bruce. Their daughter called them from Poughkeepsie, N. Y., where she is now living, saying that Capt. Bruce had called from San Francisco and said he would hasten East as soon as government regulations had been complied with.

Dr. Bruce was for many years a practicing physician in Springfield and formerly was physician for the Springfield Police Department. Capt. Bruce, who is a native of Rutland, Vt., where his parents Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Bruce still live, made his home here at 820 Allen Street and maintained offices at 20 Maple St. His grandmother, Mrs. Clara Brown, lives in Brattleboro, as do two grand-aunts, Mrs. Edward Morse and Mrs. George Whitney.

He enlisted as a first lieutenant in the Army Medical Corps Reserves in 1935 and was promoted to captain in 1939. He went to Manila in August, 1941, and was on Corregidor when the Japs overwhelmed the American forces which tried to hold the Philippines in the early days of Jap invasion.

REMINDER

When you contemplate spending a day or part thereof in clinical study in Boston, let the **Bureau of Cinical Information of the Massachusetts Medical Society** help you plan that day, (without charge!)

Senate 69—the Chiropractic Bill was heard before the Committee on Public Health on February 27. The Chiropractors had a large delegation present and argued their case effectively. If any member of the Committee on Public Health lives in your district, he should be interviewed and our opposition to this bill explained. We believe in a single board of registration and a single examination and that after a man has passed this examination, we do not care whether he practices chiropractic or surgery or anything else, but we insist on his having enough general background to

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W. E. Browne, Chairman
Committee on Legistlation

Later! S. 69 has just been reported favorably out of the committee. It must be defeated on floor by your Senators and Representatives.—Ed.

"DO OR DON'T"

Good health legislation doesn't just come by itself. You know that legislators respond to their constituents' feelings.

If you want Senate Bill 396 passed by the Massachusetts Legislators separating Osteopathy from the regulations now governing all who would practice the healing art—don't call your senator or representative.

P. S. The Homopaths and the rest of us have all passed basic training tests. Up to now, we all prove we should know what is the matter with the patient first and then can treat him as we see fit. —Ed.

HOT FLASH

When next you imbibe a Horse's Neck, remember to consume the spiral of lemon peel as well, for Wawra and Webb have discovered therein the new vitamin, a derivative of hespiridin which was forecast in the previous decade by Szent-Gyorgi. It will decrease the fragility of your capillaries and so help to prevent local hemorrhage when you get the check.

HOT FLASH

"Passive resistance in the production of new citizens," claims Lord Horder, Physician to George VI, Rex et Imp., "is the chief cause of the white race's birth rate problems. Does this obtain in leap year? And what about the influence of Morgenthau?